

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Ferguson for extending the courtesy of allowing a personal interview of this application, at the USPTO on Monday, October 27, 2008. Although an agreement was not reached as to any specific claims, applicant believes that the interview will prove helpful in moving this case toward allowance of claims directed to patentable subject matter.

More specifically, this response cancels prior independent claim 1, and presents in its place new independent claim 21, directed to a swivel adapter. Compared to prior claim 1, at the examiner's suggestion applicant has added more details to recite the structural relationships of, and the directional orientations of various parts of the elongated base 60. New claim 21 also recites a head support connector 24 located at the inboard side of the base 60, and a handle 70 with an elongated shank adapted to extend to the inboard side of the device to cooperate with the head support connector 24 to removably secure a head support to the inboard side of the base 60. New claim 21 also recites the details of boss 56, particularly the pivot surface 55 onto which the adapter 52 is mounted for pivoting motion. New claim 21 describes a first device connector facing in the outward direction, and operable to removably hold an additional device. Still further, new claim 21 recites a clamp operatively connected to the adapter, including a clamp operator operable to clamp the adapter 52 on the pivot surface 55 at a desired orientation with respect to the base 60, and also to unclamp the center adapter 52 from the pivot surface 55, to allow the center adapter to rotate with respect to the pivot surface 55. Also, new claim 21 specifies that the pivoting of the center adapter 52 about the

boss via the clamp operator is independent of the removable securement of the head support via the handle 70, and that both the clamp operator and the handle 70 are controllable from the outboard side of the structure.

These structural features provide a number of advantages for the user. First, at least one additional device support, or holder, is available for mounting an additional device onto the adapter. Because the adapter is rotatable relative to the pivot surface, this additional device support can be rotated relative to the boss to locate the additional device support in the desired position. Moreover, movement of this additional device support to the desired position, and locking it in place to the desired position, is facilitated by the location of the clamp on the outboard side of the base. Still further, a head support is connectable to the head support connection on the inboard side of the base via control of the handle 70, located on the outboard side of the base. Thus, the location of the additional support device and the head support device can be controlled independently of each other, and both can be controlled from the outboard side of the swivel adapter.

Dependent claim 2 has been amended to now depend upon new claim 21, and therefore incorporates all of the features recited in new claim 21. That means that each of dependent claims 3-5, which depend on claim 2, now also depend on new claim 21, although indirectly.

Amended claim 20 is directed to the swivel adapter as recited in claim 21, plus the previously recited structure related to the transition arm, a U-shaped frame, and a base unit handle, the handle including a linkage to provide mechanical advantage. Amended claim 12 is directed to a swivel adapter, but describes in more detail: 1) the split bore formed in the center adapter; 2) the clamp; and

3) the accompanying clamp operator for clamping or unclamping the center adapter on the pivot surface at a desired location. Dependent claim 13 incorporates by reference the features of amended claim 12.

Claims 14-16 remain withdrawn.

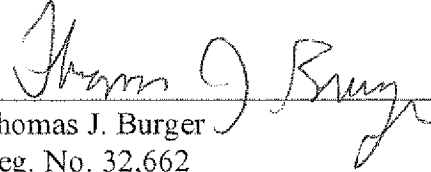
Claim 17, directed to a base unit handle, has been amended to more clearly set forth the subject matter regarded as patentable. Amended claim 19 is directed to an apparatus connectable to a surgical table, including a U-shaped frame with a crossbar, a transition arm, and a base unit handle generally of the same type as recited in independent claim 17.

In view of the amendments to all of the independent claims, and applicant's filing of a Request for Continued Examination, i.e. an RCE, applicant respectfully asserts that all the present claims patentably define over the cited prior art. If there are any questions or concerns regarding the amended claims, applicant's undersigned attorney respectfully requests that he be contacted by telephone, at the number listed below.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.17(e), please see the electronic fee calculation sheet for the Request for Continued Examination charge in the amount of \$810. Applicant believes no other additional fees are necessary. Should any additional fees or surcharges be deemed necessary, Examiner has authorization to charge fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Application No. 10/549,876
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Reply to Office Action dated August 15, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Burger", is written over a horizontal line.

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